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FEATURING

DOCTOR WHO

HOW CAN THE
DOCTOR
SAVE THE
CITY OF THE
CURSED?

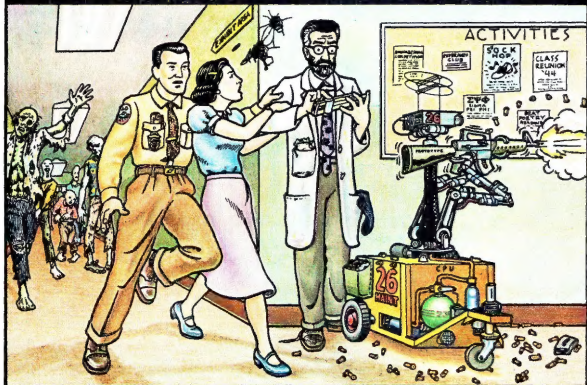
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GOT IT!

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PRESENTS:

DOCTOR
WHO

CITY OF THE CURSED

PART TWO

NOTHING
CAN SURVIVE
BARABARA--
THE BLOOD
BUG!

THE
BIG HATE
HAS COME!

HEAVENS!
THIS WOULD
NEVER HAVE
HAPPENED IF I'D
COME TO
SANDORM!

THE TARDIS HAS
LANDED IN THE ALIEN
CITY OF SOMBOR,
WHERE EMOTION IS
POWER. THEN THE
DOCTOR IS RESCUED BY
THE REBELS OF ISMO--
THE ISMO EMOTIONAL
PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATION--
AND TAKEN TO THEIR
BASE IN THE SWAMPS
BEYOND THE CITY.

NOW ONE HATE
CRUEL LEADER OF
A REBEL SPLINTER
GROUP, UNLEASHES
A NEW TERROR--

BLURP!
BLURP!

NIGHT OF THE BARABARA!

WRITERS: WAGNER+HILLS / ARTIST: DAVE GIBBONS / COLORIST: GAFFORD

MARVEL PREMIERE™ FEATURING DOCTOR WHO Vol. 1, No. 85, June, 1981. (U.S.P.S. 425-930) Published by MARVEL COMICS GROUP, James E. Gatto, President, Stan Lee, Publisher, Michael Hobson, Vice-President, Publishing, Milton Schiffman, Vice-President, Production, OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 575 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022. SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT NEW YORK, N.Y. AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES. Published bi-monthly. Copyright © 1978, 1981 British Broadcasting Corporation. All rights reserved. The advertising and editorial material appearing on pages 4, 8, 9, 13, 20, 24, 25, 29, 31 and 32 only, copyright © 1981 by Marvel Comics Group, a division of Cadence Industries Corporation. All rights reserved. Price 50¢ per copy in the U.S. and Canada. Subscription rate \$6.00 for 12 issues. Canada, \$7.00. Foreign, \$8.00. Printed in the U.S.A. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the conditions that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. DOCTOR WHO (including all prominent characters featured in the issue), and the distinctive likenesses thereof, are trademarks of the British Broadcasting Corporation and are used with permission of the trademark owner. Postmaster: Send address changes to Subscription Dept., Marvel Comics Group, 575 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022.





EACH OF THE REBELS HAD
ADOPTED ONE EMOTION,
TO PRACTICE IT, AND KEEP
IT ALIVE FOR THE DAY
WHEN THEY WOULD BE
FREE TO FEEL AGAIN.
FOR SOME, THE BARA-
SARA HAD BEEN
TOO MUCH...



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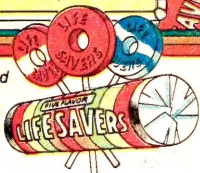
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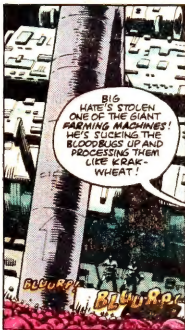
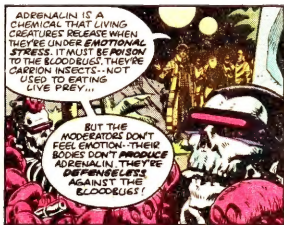


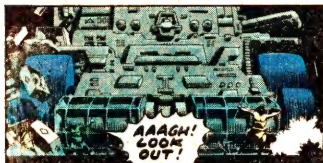
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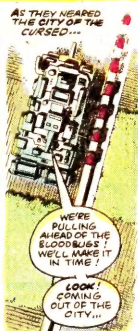
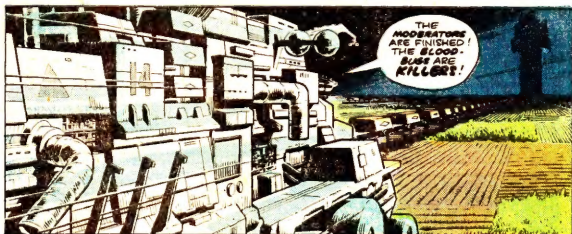
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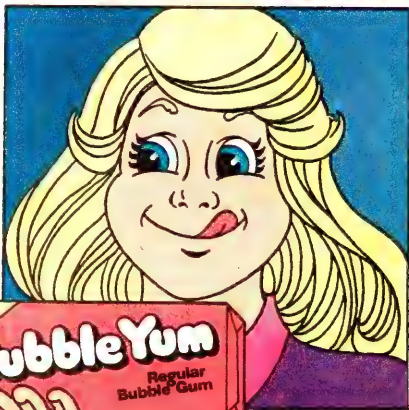
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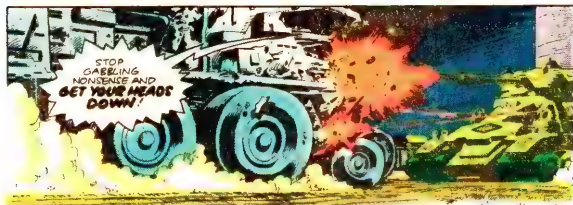
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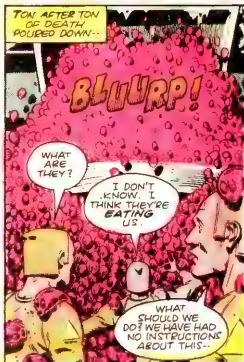


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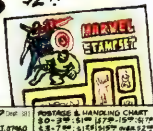
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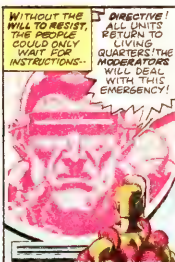


ALREADY, BILLIONS OF BLOODBUSS HAD REACHED CITY LEVEL...

BLURP!

BLURP!

THEIR WEIGHT IS COLLAPSING THAT WALK-WAY!



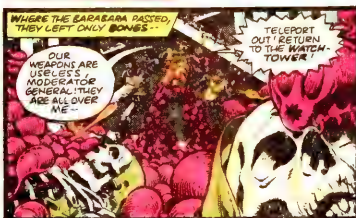
WITHOUT THE WILL TO RESIST, THE PEOPLE COULD ONLY WAIT FOR INSTRUCTIONS--

DIRECTIVE! ALL UNITS RETURN TO LIVING QUARTERS! THE MODERATORS WILL DEAL WITH THIS EMERGENCY!



UNIT 921/0008 REPORTS SHE IS UNABLE TO OBEY INSTRUCTIONS!

UNIT 107/012A REPORTS HE IS BEING EATEN!



WHERE THE BARABARA PASSED, THEY LEFT ONLY BONES--

OUR WEAPONS ARE USELESS, MODERATOR GENERAL! THEY ARE ALL OVER ME--

TELEPORT OUT! RETURN TO THE WATCH-TOWER!



IN THE WATCHTOWER, THE MODERATOR GENERAL, LEADER OF THE CITY'S POLICE, WAITED--

STRIKE THE CREATURES OFF HIM!

LET HIM DIE!



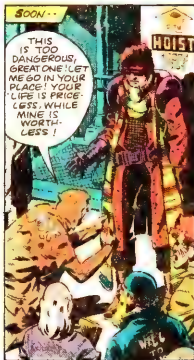
WE MUST KNOW OUR ENEMY LET THE BARABARA HAVE THEIR WAY WITH HIM...WE WILL OBLIVIOUS

BLURP!



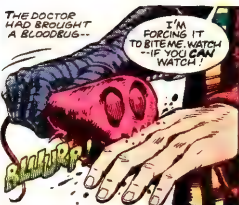
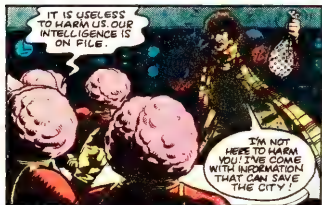
DOWN TO THE BONE IN UNDER SIX MINUTES, MODERATOR GENERAL.

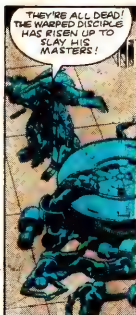
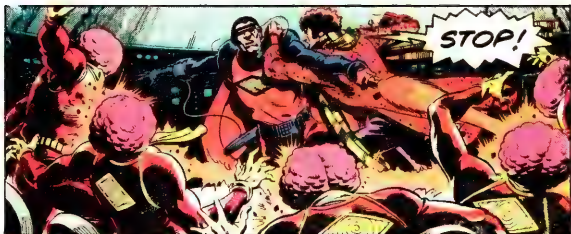
AND THERE ARE BILLIONS OF THEM OUT THERE VERY WELL, DESTROY THEM.

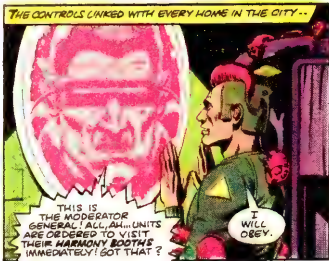
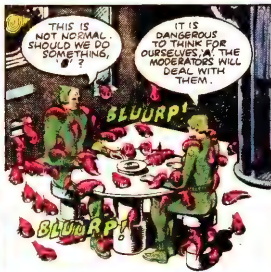
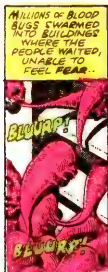
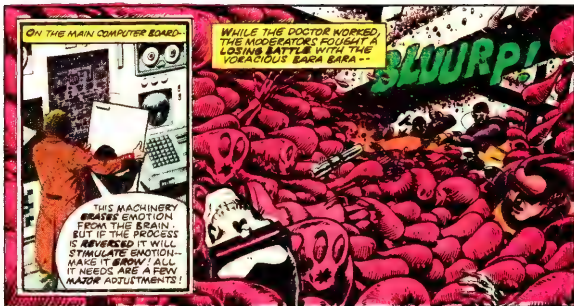


AS THE MODERATORS TELEPORTED IN, THE DOCTOR TELEPORTED OUT--









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SWEEPSTAKES!

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A LUCKY RECIPIENT
OF A HECTIC THREE
MINUTE SPREE AT
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FROM
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--true believers every one!

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were awarded to Marvelites from the rock-bound coast
of Maine to the sunny speedways of California! The
greatest number of winners reside in the state of Ohio!

100 FOURTH PRIZES

went to keepers of the faith all over America! The
smallest town represented was Jay Botz, Montana,
coincidentally, the home of the hallowed phrase, "Nuff
Said!"



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CRANIAL SOCKETS
HAD BEEN IMPLANTED
IN EVERY CITIZEN
AT BIRTH, THROUGH
THESE, EMOTION WAS
GRADED FROM
THE BRAIN--



NOW THEY WERE
BEING USED TO
CREATE EMOTION--



THE MACHINERY
IS AUTOMATIC! I'LL
JUST PROGRAM
IT TO CONCENTRATE
ON THE FEAR
AND HATE CENTERS
THEY'LL PRODUCE
MOST ADRENALIN!

AAAAIEEEEE!



IT--IT'S
DYING!

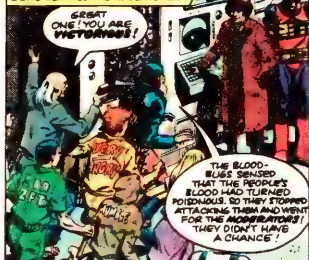
FEELING WAS
RETURNING. LONG-
DORMANT GLANDS
PUMPED ADRENALIN
INTO THEIR
BLOODSTREAMS. IT
WAS POISON TO
THE BARA BARA!

FOR MANY,
EMOTION HAD
COME TOO
LATE--



THEY ATE
MY 'B'! I'LL
KILL THEM!
I'LL KILL
THEM!

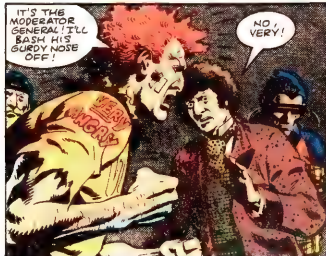
MUCH LATER, THE REBELS OF
ZEPHO REACHED THE WATCHTOWER--



GREAT
ONE! YOU ARE
VICTIMIZED!

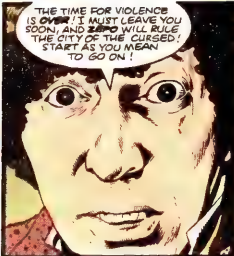
THE BLOOD-
BUGS SENSED
THAT THE PEOPLE'S
BLOOD HAD TURNED
POISONOUS. SO THEY STOPPED
ATTACKING THEM AND WENT
FOR THE MODERATORS!
THEY DIDN'T HAVE
A CHANCE!

IT'S THE
MODERATOR
GENERAL! I'LL
BASH HIS
GURDY NOSE
OFF!



NO,
VERY!

THE TIME FOR VIOLENCE
IS OVER! I MUST LEAVE YOU
SOON, AND ZEPHO WILL RULE
THE CITY OF THE CURSED!
START AS YOU MEAN
TO GO ON!





A FEW DAYS LATER THE TARDIS WAS REPAIRED AND READY...



NEXT ISSUE **STAR LORD in ^{VS} PLANET STORY!** ^{DD}

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JIM SANCHEZ
OR
B. S. SUDANSKY
ASSISTANT EDITOR

IN CASE YOU WERE WONDERING...

Elsewhere, it was announced that Paul Gulacy would be drawing the cover for this issue of MARVEL PREMIERE. And — honest to goosh — we did have Paul lined up to do our cover. But then, that of devil time stepped in, and Paul found that he just didn't have room in his busy schedule to do the job the way he wanted. Apologetically, Mr. G. bowed out, and we turned to that demon of the paint palette, Earl Norden... a man who is certainly no stranger to the readers of SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN. Earl really cut loose and came up with the dynamite painting which graces our cover.

Thanks, Earl. Let's do it again some time! (When there's more time.)

Gentlemen

I waited until MARVEL PREMIERE #58 came out before I felt I could comment on your handling of Doctor Who. I think you did an excellent job. I had already read the Iron Legion story in DOCTOR WHO WEEKLY #518 but I liked it much better in color.

The article in the back of issue #57 was very well done. Good show, Joe!

Warren C. Sinclair Jr.
(no address given)

Dear Marvel

Just a quick note to tell you how much I enjoyed issue #58 of MARVEL PREMIERE. I'm one of those unfortunate who has never been exposed to the good Doctor Who before, so this issue was indeed a treat. I'm pleased that you chose to reprint the British version rather than formulate your own. It is, after all, the definitive version — and, if nothing else, it was fun to view the efforts of some different writers and artists for a change.

Kevin C. McConnell
118 Main Avenue
Warren, PA 16365

Dear Marvel:

The last two issues of MARVEL PREMIERE featuring the incomparable Doctor Who have been the greatest you've ever done. I was really thrilled to see them, especially since I am a fairly new WHO convert, with an insatiable appetite for anything on the Doctor. Those two issues confirmed my faith in both you and the Doctor. I've been reading CONAN for a long time, as well as several other publications of yours, and you have constantly lived up to the highest standards. Wouldn't you know that it would be Marvel to be the first to produce the Doctor over here. WHO and Marvel were made for each other.

Echoing Margaret Purdy's letter, I'd like to see you give the Doctor a travelling companion. Do you think we could see one story with Leela soon? Of course, this is all on the premise that you'll give the Doctor his own comic. I can promise you a legion of supporters here in Kingston.

Sandra Fennick
859 Ashton Place
Kingston, Ontario
Canada K7M 6B2

Dear Marvel

I've been watching Doctor Who for over two years, and I really liked MARVEL PREMIERE #57-59 featuring DOCTOR WHO. You really captured the Doctor's charm and humor. The stories were both adventurous and exciting.

I think the greatest part of the magazines was the article by Mary Jo Duffy, "Who is the Doctor?" told me many interesting and surprising facts about the good Doctor that I didn't know. Thanks, Jo, for a magnificent piece.

And I thank you, Marvel, for bringing Dr. Who around. I'm sure the British would approve.

David Brainer
86 St. Paul Street
North Smithfield, RI 02855

Dear Marvel

In the early 1960s, you put out a comic with heroes with real emotions. I said that it couldn't be done.

I was wrong.
Toward the end of the 1970s, I heard that you were going to produce a comic based on the Micronauts. I said, "It's gonna bomb!"
I was wrong again.

The other day, I bought an issue of MARVEL PREMIERE featuring DOCTOR WHO. I said, "It can't be as good as the television show."
Well, I was wrong again, and I couldn't be happier.

DOCTOR WHO has hit the American shores and brought with him a lot of the old Marvel magic, and more! DOCTOR WHO has sophisticated humor, science-fiction fantasy, colorful characters, bizarre villains, plenty of action, and excellent writing and art. I'm very pleased.

If you plan to give Dr. Who his own book, go right ahead. I can always say, "It won't work," and be proved wrong as usual.

Mitchell Rentzier
176 Oxford Street
Brooklyn, NY 11235

Dear Marvel

At long last, the world's most fantastic hero of all time (and space) is in his own Marvel Comic. The Doctor is in, and so is action, adventure, and a whole lot of fun!

I hope that the Doctor becomes a regular Marvel Comic, and that the creative team for the book would be Roger Stern and Frank Miller. (Talk about reaching for the sky!)

Leon Allen Jr.
6654 23rd Street
Sacramento, CA 95822

Dear Gang

Great! Fantastic! Marvelous! Titanic! Stupendous! Gratifying! Delightful! Other Superlatives As Needed! Good, even!

Above, please find a few comments stating my opinion of your DOCTOR WHO series. Count me as a strong yes-vote for a regular comic featuring the Doctor. I have been a great fan of the show for some time, and I also get any issues of Marvel's British DOCTOR WHO magazine that come around here.

I would also like to ask all readers, especially in my area, to write their local TV stations (PBS is usually best) and urge them to put the Doctor's adventures on the air.

Oh, yes! Compliments to the writers and artists are due, for so beautifully capturing the "just slightly daff" character of Tom Baker's Doctor.

Michael Monard
2449 Dupont Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55405

MARVEL PREMIERE #60 ends our four-issue run of DOCTOR WHO. If you'd like to see more of the Doctor and his friends, please drop us a line and let us know.

And be sure to join us in sixty days for a very different kind of STAR-LORD story. By Doug Moench and Tom Sutton!

THE MIGHTY MARVEL CHECKLIST

MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE #78 — Giant-Man and the Iceman join the ever-living, blue-eyed Thing!
SPIDER-WOMAN #38 — Guest starring the uncanny X-Men!
STAR TREK #14 — We Are Dying, Egypt, Dying!
DAREDEVIL #171 — DD vs. the Kingpin!
MARVEL SUPER HEROES #88 — (Reprints Hulk #143) — The Inhibitor from Beyond!
DAZZLER #4 — Final battle with Dr. Doom! Plus, Nightmare!
EX-ZAR #3 — The last, taught fate of Shanna!
KING COMIC #6 — Conan's quest for his kidnapped queen!
AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #217 — Sand-Man and Hydro-Man team up and attack!
CAPTAIN AMERICA #258 — Who? Blackbuster?

THOR #308 — Loki and Kamela attack New York!
MICRONAUTS #30 — To Save Homeworld!
GHOST RIDER #57 — Enter the Apparition!
SAVAGE SHE-HULK #17 — Make Way for the Man-Elephant!
MOON KNIGHT #8 — Moon Knight goes mad!
DR. STRANGE #47 — Dr. Blangé powerless against the master of illusion!
INCREDIBLE HULK #280 — Show down in Japan with Glenn Talbot!
AVENGERS #208 — The mad menace of the eternal war or called the Berserker!
CONAN #123 — Horror! Beneath the Hills!
MARVEL TALES #128 — (Reprints Spider-Man #151) — The shocking return of a surprise super-villain!
T-MEN #145 — The old and new X-Men at the mercy of Dr. Doom Plus Arcade!

ROM #18 — ROM is trapped in Limbo with all his old foes!
POWER MAN AND FIST #70 — Cage and the Fist hot on the trail of drug smugglers!
FANTASTIC FOUR #231 — Shygar blasts the Baxter Building into the Negative Zone!
MARVEL TEAM-UP #186 — Spidey and Captain America!
IRON MAN #147 — A crisis called Blacklash!
PETER PARKER #55 — The menace of Neko, the Exploding Man!
DEFENDERS #66 — The Defenders and Ghost Rider at the mercy of the Six-Fingered Hand!
MARVEL SUPER ACTION #32 — (Reprints Avengers #711) — The Avengers and the Black Knight vs. The Grand-Master and Kang!
STAR WARS #48 — Leia and Vader play a strange game of power, propaganda, and Death!
MASTER OF KUNG FU #181 — Not Smoke 'N' Beads, No Blood!

MARVEL PREMIERE #58 — Featuring Dr. Who! Cover painting by Paul Gulacy.
SGT. FURY #164 — (Reprints Sgt. Fury #70) — Meet the Museum Raiders!
WHAT IF #27 — What if Phoenix Had Lived?

MARVEL MAGAZINES

CRAZY #74 — Crazy Cats of the Future! "Finger vs. Finger!" The Elephant Man! — Dallas parody. Kinetic Kite. Olexio. Howard the Duck and more... What!
SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #64 — The terrible secret of the "Children of Rhan!"
MARVEL PREVIEW #26 — King Kull stars in Doug Moench and John Bolton's "Demon in a Silvered Glass" featuring some of the finest artwork to ever grace a Marvel production. And the ending art is taken to sneeze at other!

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HELLO, GOODBYE, HELLO



THE
DOCTOR
AND
ROMANA

(or, "Who's Coming and Who's Going")

by Mary Jo Duffy

Illustrated by Walt Simonson

It is a fact of human nature that everyone loves a villain. Where audience response is concerned, nice guys do, indeed, finish last. We all admire acts of evil, evil on a grand scale, particularly evil with style, evil without mercy or remorse, (so long, of course, as we are safe at home in our living rooms, or in a darkened theatre, in the safety of a crowd, so that nothing nasty can get to us while we enjoy ourselves.) The Star Wars audiences root for Luke Skywalker, but it is Darth Vader who captured the public's imagination. Sweeney Todd (a musical based on an old thriller about a barber and a baker who make their profits by slicing up his customers and serving them to her) swept the Tony awards two years ago. Dracula, Lord of the Undead, is currently enjoying a renaissance, both as a major sex symbol and as a villain. The entire world waited with bated breath to see who shot J.R.

There is an endless assortment of notorious nasties to choose from. Dr. Doom. Professor Moriarty. and the great Prince of Lies himself, Satan.

Against such an array, our heroes tend to look a little washed out and uninteresting. Much as we may want them to win, they can even become tedious. ("No, he'd never do that, would he? He's too nice for that!")

What is the solution? When you've got an exciting villain, how do you keep the audience awake long enough to get them interested in the fate and personality of the protagonist? For years, soap operas have tried the following gambit, with limited success: they have the good guys (and girls) fight the bad guys on their own terms, and with their own weapons, eventually becoming almost as rotten as they are. ("You commit adultery? Okay, me, too!" "You're going to destroy my business and home? Not if I destroy yours first!") The trouble is, it never really works. The good guys still stick at delivering the coup de grace, or at hurling the innocent, or at conquering the world (well, everybody's got to have some ambition, haven't they?) Still too nice, you see, and it trips them up. What you wind up operating with is two opposing sets of villains, and one of them gutless.

These days, people are afraid of being just plain good. They're too embarrassed at the thought, I suppose, or too afraid of seeming silly. Or maybe they're worried about boring people.

But the Doctor has never worried about looking silly, has often been silly, in fact, and his audiences, which include an estimated 40% adults, have never been bored. The villains on Doctor Who are legion, all of them rotten, most of them extremely colorful, and many of them extremely unpopular. (The Dalek phenomenon has to be observed to be believed. Epic editor Archie Goodwin is hoping we can import these kill-crazed salt cellars to the States and convince them that cockroaches are their natural enemy. "Exterminate, exterminate!") How can a hero help but be forgotten when he's constantly surrounded by the likes of the Daleks, the Cybermen, and the Sontarans, the Krynoids, the Fendahl, and Sutekh, god of Death? How can any man compete with all that charismatic villainy and charm?

With a floppy hat, and an infinite scarf. With a rolling eye and a toothy disarming smile. With dotty brilliance, and unabashed goodness, and great panache. With a marvelous performance by Tom Baker, who has time and again, beaten his picturesque adversaries at their own game, acting them right off the screen.

I'll never forget the first time I saw Doctor Who. It was Baker's first episode, and the first time the program had ever been broadcast in the New York area. I tuned in somewhat late and missed all of the explanations about Time Lords and TARDISes, and bodies that conveniently regenerate into new actors when someone new takes over the title role. All I knew beforehand was that the show had been around for about fifteen years, the main character was called Doctor Who (as it turned out, I was wrong in that — the main character is simply called the Doctor. The title of the show is Doctor Who — both a pun and a very good question) and that he was some kind of scientist who fought weird and interesting things.

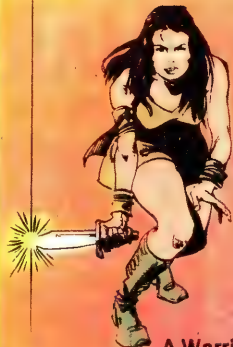
There were only two characters onscreen, both locked in what appeared to be a storeroom. One was an oversized, intriguing, formidable-looking robot (and you know how the pub. c. loves robots.) The other character, whom the robot was diligently attempting to dismember, was well, he had to be either an escaped utah, or an asprigging junkman, or both. Curly-headed and aquiline-nosed, with big, wild-looking eyes and a rolling, resonant voice. He was wearing a big, soft hat, a floppy coat, and an endless, ridiculous scarf, wound all about him and still trailing the floor. Clearly just a colorful minor character, or an actor from another series altogether, who'd wandered in by mistake and who'd be leaving again as soon as he could manage (I bet if the robot had anything to say about it).

As I watched, my attention thoroughly caught, the robot lunged. You are the Doctor? It inquired accusingly.

The latter demaion confirmed that he was, and then jumped out of the way as the robot charged again, staying just out of reach, and trying to talk it out of attacking him.

That was the Doctor? That was a scientist? That was the title character of a fifteen-year-old series? Impossible! Where was his age? Where was his superior intellect? Where were his lab coat and his weapons? Why was he so much fun? So interesting? So young?

Leela...



A Warrior
of the
Survey Team...?

Let me tell you, the next day I couldn't have picked that robot out of a police lineup, or recognized him if I met him on the street, but oh, the Doctor — it was the beginning of one of the great love affairs of my life.

Over the past six years, Tom Baker has made the Doctor as popular and memorable a character as any villain, animal, vegetable, or mineral. Almost certainly, Baker's pre-Doctor Who background contributes to the vivid eccentricity he brings to the character. As a young man, Baker spent six years in a monastery, and two after that in military service (which he

says he survived by pretending to be a harmless and rather sensitive lunatic. Pretending, hmmm? Afterwards, he entered the theatre, and over the years he played a variety of roles, both on stage and screen, seldom as the bland and virtuous leading man. He played everything from animals (like Snoopy) to Shakespearean drama, to horror. He achieved notable success playing villains, such as Rasputin in *Nicholas and Alexandra*, and in the *Golden Voyage of Sinbad*, which brought him to the attention of Doctor Who's producers. (And sharp-eyed American viewers with a strong stomach for nonsense may have recognized him in last year's *The Curse of King Tut's Tomb*; incongruously decked out in turban and body paint, as a villain who was in turn betrayed by his evil master.) And perhaps that is what it takes — an actor who has played a number of villains and really understands what makes them work, to bring life to a virtuous, altruistic character.

Tom Baker has made the Doctor a hero as likeable, charismatic, and colorful as any of the villains he's fought. (Considerably more so than some, in fact.) He has captured the public's imagination and held it, seemingly effortlessly.

Of course, to do so, he'd had the help of talented writers, directors, and producers, set designers and special effects people. There have been the costume designers, those who create the music for the show, and of course a number of talented supporting players and guest stars. But no amount of support, no production values, however high, could carry the program with a poor or mediocre actor playing the lead.

When he took over the role of the Doctor, Tom Baker was not so much creating a new part as fulfilling a legacy and finding new dimensions within it. The show was first telecast in November 23, 1963, with William Hartnell as the Doctor, and in the years that followed, two other actors had played the part (three if you want to count the stepchild, Peter Cushing, in film adaptations), and there'd been several complete turn-overs in production staff. And yet, while each Doctor was supposed to be the same person as his predecessors, merely an outgrowth of or variation on the familiar character, thanks to the miracles of metamorphosis and

regeneration (the special prerogatives of the Doctor's race, the near-immortal Time Lords of Gallifrey), each Doctor has been a distinctly different sort of person, with his own style of speech and dress, and, of course, his own physiognomy.

In the 1977 BBC television special, *Whose Doctor Who* (sic), Tom Baker talked at some length about the part, his predecessors, his own style of performance, and his feelings about playing the Doctor.

Well, William Hartnell, when he got this part, was already nearing the end of his career. In fact, as you know, he wasn't a very well man by the time he finished with this, so he was actually naturally very crotchety, and quite — like a good old pro, he used that a lot, didn't he? He was very abrasive and bad-tempered in situations like that. (referring to a scene on the program) because actually, he — you know, was himself abrasive at that point in his career.

Then Patrick Troughton took it over and became a sort of pixie, which he is very good at, although he made the transition back into other parts very easily afterwards. It's very hard to describe Troughton.

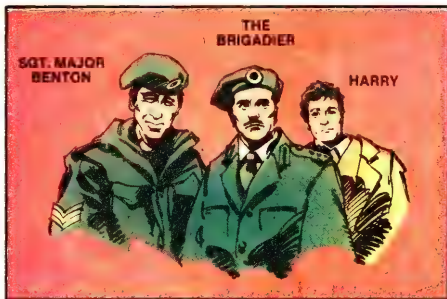
Whereas Jon (Pertwee) was much more Holmesian, wasn't he, very grand, and he's so shockingly recognizable isn't he, rather like a tall light bulb — he glitters.

I've watched the program. I think everybody's seen the program at some time or another. I used to watch it very keenly, and my reaction to it was the reaction of most actors, I think, of thinking in a vague way what a nice part it would be to play, mostly because it's just such fun.

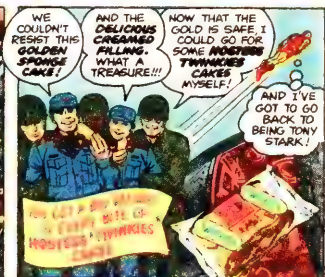
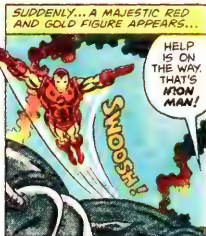
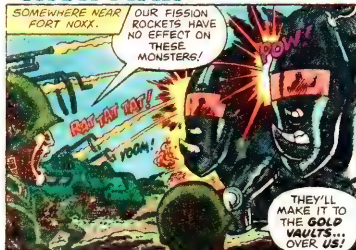
One of the problems about playing the Doctor, which makes it interesting for the actor who plays it, and everybody's been successful in it — therefore it would seem to be actor-proof — is that it's not an acting part in the sense that the character is very severely limited. There are boundaries over which the Doctor cannot go. He can't suddenly become interested in romance, he doesn't have those kind of emotions, he's not at all acquisitive, he couldn't be suddenly, gratuitously violent. So, therefore, in the ordinary sense of acting, the character can't develop, so the problem of the actor is to surprise the audience constantly.

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Much as it pains me to contradict a man whose performances have brought joy to so many people, myself included, I cannot let his statement about the role of the Doctor being actor-proof stand unchallenged. I feel that Baker is himself being overly modest, and depriving himself and his very talented colleagues of the credit they deserve. With the wrong actor in the part, in any of his incarnations, the Doctor could have been disastrous.

As far as his own interpretation of the character goes, however, Tom Baker hit the nail right on the head. It is all such fun. There's something very reassuring about watching the show, and knowing that those who need help are under the protection of a good-hearted, generally well-mannered, far-from-infallible hero, who is apt to be hinting for a cup of tea when he ought to be busy toppling evil empires, and whose solution to the most complicated moral and logistical problems is the offer of a jelly baby. He grumbles about being bothered with others' problems in the first place, and then hangs on, looking for a happy solution, long after any reasonable hero might have been expected to abandon his quest. There is never any clearcut statement from him to the villains: never any 'I am noble and good, you are sneaky and evil,' but there is also never any doubt that this is the case, and that the Doctor should (and hopefully will) win. He madly puns his assistants with his absentmindedness, his caprices, his occasional insults, but just let him suspect one of them is in the slightest danger and he is instantly converted into a desperate and single-minded man of action. (At least until he has them safely back aboard the TARDIS.) He can face the maddest, deadliest totalitarian enemy with whimsy and infuriating composure, but woe betide the locked door he wants to get through, or the companion who challenges him on a minor matter. Baker seems to enjoy it all so thoroughly, playing the funny lines to their utmost and finding hidden meanings in the most straightforward bit of speech or action, that it is impossible not to enjoy it with him. He himself compares his style of acting to the kind usually found in the comedies of Noel Coward and Oscar Wilde, very mannered, with under-the-surface snipes and hysterical trifles.

But with all the wit and lunacy, he has brought something extra and equally important with him to the role. There is never any doubt that Tom Baker's Doctor is a humane man, a man of compassion, a man who cares. He will not let evil triumph, not while he is alive. He is a good man. (And if he can have a bit of fun while he is about it, so much the better.)

One thing the latest Doctor's tenure has in common with that of his previous incarnations... this has been a period of transition and change on the show. He has run through several companions — journalist Sarah Jane Smith (Elisabeth Sladen), the charming savage, Leela (Louise Jameson), and two incarnations of the Time Lord Romana (played by Mary Tamm and then Lalla Ward, who, at one time, is engaged to Baker.) There were also two models of K-9, the brilliant robot dog. UNIT, the United Nations Intelligence Taskforce, which was introduced during the Troughton period and was a staple of the show during the Pertwee days, hasn't been seen since 'The Android Invasion,' wherein everybody was duplicated by the evil Kraals, and we wound up with two Doctors, two Sarahs, and two each of their old friends, the very proper Brigadier Alistair Gordon Lethbridge-Stewart (Nicholas Courtney), the able and amiable Sgt. Major Benton (John Levene), and the Doctor's onetime companion and straight man, Dr. Henry Sullivan (played by writer Ian Marter.)

Soon, all that will be left is the TARDIS.

After six years, Tom Baker is leaving the series.

On February 28, 1981, 29-year-old Peter Davison, perhaps best known for his portrayal of Tristram, the young vet on the BBC series based on James Herriot's *All Creatures Great and Small*, will become the fifth (or sixth, if you prefer) Doctor. He'll be acquiring a new companion, 23-year-old Janet Fielding as Tegan, an Australian air hostess, at the same time. What he will look like in the part, and how he will approach the character, are anybody's guess at this time.

Tom Baker contributed much to the mythos of Doctor Who, and to the popular imagination, during his six years in the part. That's something that cannot be altered and will not be forgotten.

Now, it's Peter Davison's turn. We'd like to wish him the best of luck with his interpretation of one of the most maddening, admirable, vivid characters in modern fiction. It should be a wonderful opportunity and experience for him, and a pleasure for us all.

We can't wait to see how it goes.



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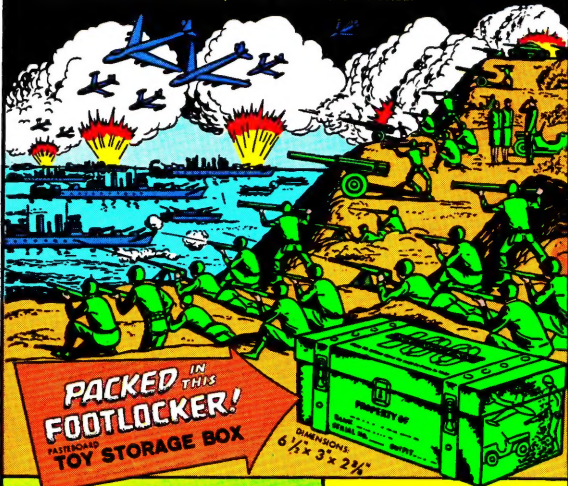
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